

Access to free, uncensored, and private communications is a human right. In the 21st century, that means the Internet. And today, that means “net neutrality,” or the basic idea that, in exchange for their *near-total* monopolies, cable and telcom companies have to let all individuals and businesses have equal access to their services.

Cable companies have tried every trick in the book to portray net neutrality as a bad thing—as though they have a right to choose who I can communicate with! We all know that there would be a public outrage if say, AT&T hung up calls made by subscribers trying to switch to Comcast, or “de-prioritized” their traffic, introducing a 5-second lag in the conversation. So why can my ISP discriminate, or “re-prioritize,” my Internet traffic because of who I’m communicating with or the content of that communication? And the lie that this is a “first-world problem,” a “luxury,” is disproved by the very fact that the federal bureaucracy used the Internet to fulfill its public comment requirements on this very proposal.

I have two providers for Internet to my home: AT&T and the newly-minted monopoly that is Spectrum. If both those providers choose to discriminate against a site I visit, I have no options left. As a consumer, that’s a major inconvenience and a lost freedom. If I were an online business owner, that would be a lost income. *How again is this a more free Internet?*

But the title of this NPRM, “Restoring Internet Freedom,” is the boldest rebuke of *actual* freedom yet. **It is doubly delusional to believe that providing every American citizen and business with equal access to the Internet, as a paying subscriber or content provider, somehow infringes on the “freedom” of the massive cable and telcom conglomerates who have survived and gorged their coffers on their government-sanctioned monopolies that crush the economic freedom of alternative service providers.**

That’s right: *it’s not a free market that this proposal seeks to establish but a closed one*, where the government stifles competition (like municipal broadband providers) and then allows the few non-competitive, sanctioned players to prioritize (or even slow to the point of censorship) communications based on their whim—or their bottom line—all while opening the door for companies to “voluntarily” comply with warrantless government surveillance and censorship.

If the Federal Communications Commission adopts these proposed rules, they will be putting a stain on America’s free market economy and on Americans’ basic rights. The countless citizens who gave up their time and their privacy to speak out about these outrageous rules here will not soon forget that at the polls.

Sincerely,
Aidan Hunt